



THE SCOOP

The Social Prescribing Newsletter for Well Up North PCN

"I feel over the moon and I want to thank my local Doctors for that little push I needed to get back out there and do something for "ME" Thank you, thank you, thank you, it certainly has put a spring back into my life. And it was so easy just to walk in".

A patient's experience of Social Prescribing delivered by CAROL GUNN



WHAT'S INSIDE?

SPECIAL FEATURE

**SMILE WHILE YOU ARE
SWIMMING - THE BENEFITS OF
SWIMMING WITH DEMENTIA**

- Team update
- Social Prescribing case studies
- New services - Health & Wellbeing Coaches / Maternal Mental Health
- Group updates

by Jane Cannam

So whilst there is nothing new in "going green" or "getting some sea air" it has become very clear to us the amazing successes of Green Social Prescribing initiatives locally. Green Social Prescribing is the process of linking people from primary care to a community activity that support health and wellbeing through the natural environment. Throughout the PCN there are a range of initiatives in the community

for patients to engage with...there is sea dipping with Mind Dippers, Northumberland Recovery College sessions at the Alnwick Community Allotment, Roots n Shoots and the Gents Garden in Alnwick Gardens and walking groups in Berwick, Amble, Morpeth, Widdrington and Druridge Bay. Even as the temperature drops there is much to be said for putting on "yer big coat" and "going outdoors".

Our newest addition to the Green Social Prescribing offer in the PCN is a project being launched at the Amble Health Centre looking to transform the quad area into a sensory garden.

Patients are invited to get involved here and enjoy time outside, transforming an area at the surgery and making new friends. See Page 8 for more details.

Pictured above is the entrance to Alnwick Community Allotment - Mosaics by the young people who attended Gallery Youth's Art Project at Alnwick Gardens this summer. This volunteer led project has been judged for Northumberland and Alnwick in Bloom - results pending but fingers crossed!!

TEAM TALK



Hi my name is Becca; I live in the Scottish Borders with my husband and our young son. I'm a new Health and Wellbeing coach. I think it's so important to take charge of your own wellbeing and as much as I will be engaged in helping others to reach their goals, I know this job will help me reach mine too. I was ready for a new challenge and this is a dream job for me. I am hoping in the future I can run my own Art Therapy groups within the GP practices, and bring a little yoga for the mind.



Hi! I'm Lisa, the latest GP Link Worker to join the Well Up North team. I am excited to work with people to improve their health and wellbeing by empowering them to make their own positive choices. I have previously worked for the NHS and been involved in local community services in various forms over the years and have a great knowledge of the wonderful things available to help and support people in Northumberland. I have lived in Northumberland all my life and I love walking the beautiful beaches & woodlands with my little dog.



Hello! My name is Veronika and I am the new Maternal Mental Health Link Worker (MMHLW). I have 30 years of experience working in the field of emotional well-being, whether that be through my work with arts in health, drama and art therapy, women's theatre companies, mental health services, and in specialist child psychology assessment and treatment services. I have been lucky enough throughout my working life to be able to accompany people on their journey of self-understanding and change, supporting people to manage to live the life they desire. Everyone needs a little help, perhaps now more than ever, and I am passionate about empowering others with healthy and effective solutions, skills and support for managing some of these challenges. In my new role as MMHLW, I look forward to meeting you all and supporting women to build the inner-resources and skills to help them cope, when faced with adversity, distress or difficulties in life, during the peri-natal period.

NEW SERVICES

Maternal Mental Health Support Project

The Maternal Mental Health Project can provide holistic, emotional and practical support to those women experiencing mild to moderate difficulties with their mental health at any stage throughout the maternity continuum.

We may support with such difficulties as loss, crying babies, stress, adjusting to motherhood, relationship difficulties, financial struggles, isolation or loneliness, for example. We believe that nothing is so big that it can't be sorted out. There is usually a solution to every problem and working together with us can help sort out the things that are upsetting you.

We can try to help you if you:

- Feel sad
- Have problems that interfere with your family, friends or at college or work.
- Feel anxious and scared
- Worry about things
- Have trouble talking or sleeping
- Feel depressed or down
- Are scared of certain things, thoughts, objects or places
- Find it hard to concentrate because of your difficulties
- Have to check or repeat things, or worry about germs
- Don't like yourself very much



We work to identify what matters most to individuals and support them with improving their health and wellbeing.

We aim to help build up emotional wellbeing and resilience in offering a range of personalized support sessions that help in the self-management of their recovery and reach goals for positive change.

This may include 1:1 support from a Maternal Mental Health Link Worker (MMHLW), group activities, on-line support communities, peer support sessions, accessing new opportunities, or supporting people to connect with a variety of practical, emotional and community support services in their locality.

Sessions could take place at a woman's GP surgery, somewhere in the community, or via video call or telephone.

The MMHLW will explore and understand a woman's difficulties, and help set goals which we will then work towards together. The MMHLW can also support women to attend other groups or appointments, when it all feels a bit overwhelming or scary.

Referrals can be made by your GP, Primary Care Mental health practitioners, social prescribers, community midwives and health visitors.



HEALTH AND WELLBEING COACHES

TOM, BECCA & JAKE



Health and Wellbeing Coaching is a person-centred approach that focuses on empowering and supporting someone to achieve their goals. A coach will help someone focus on the smallest and biggest factors that could influence their success and provide a chance to support them through their journey. A Coach could work with someone on anything from exercise and diet support to sleep and self-confidence as long as it is important to that person.

Within our practices our experienced coaching team of Tom, Jake and Becca offer 1-2-1 coaching both in person and over the phone. Sessions are taken at your pace with loads of time to talk through all the details that matter. After the first session the coaching service will be there for you as long as needed with regular reviews throughout.

Case Study

Referred to HWBC service by GP after fatty liver diagnosis. Patient obese (BMI 30+). Engaged with HWBC regularly with fortnightly follow up calls. Patient identified issue as overeating and high fat/sugar food choices. Turning to food to help with concentration, high stress etc. Patient had successfully established regular exercise routine over lockdown, patient had also tried a weight loss app but changes did not last. The patient had tried other weight loss programmes before but changes did not last for a variety of reasons, so it has been important to explore this with patient in order to learn lessons and adopt a more sustainable and successful approach. The patient has made fantastic progression and is working to fully achieving their goal, patient has shown improvement in action planning and overcoming barriers to progression. HWBC support has been important in keeping goals realistic and achievable in order to break existing habits and establish new ones.

How to book?

If you think health and wellbeing coaching is for you then speak to one of the clinicians at your practice or your social prescribing link worker. Once referred one of the Health and Wellbeing Coaches will be in touch with you to speak more about what can be offered and how it can be tailored to your needs.



SMILE WHILE YOU'RE SWIMMING

Case Study from Jan Casson, Dementia Lead

90 year old female, with Dementia and visual impairment.

Mrs X was a very keen swimmer, but due to her diagnosis, has been unable to swim for the past 4-5 years. Following a discussion with Mrs X and her husband, we decided to try a swim session to see if she could manage. Mrs X was very excited at the possibility of swimming again, so a date was set, a thorough risk assessment carried out and we were off.

The support offered by the sports centre team was excellent, we were given a tour of the facilities, and an explanation about locker use, they could see it meant a lot to her, so they shared that enjoyment and made her feel very welcome.

At the first session, Mrs X was trembling as we neared the pool steps, I thought she was having second thoughts, so we stopped, and she explained that she was just very excited, so off we went. The pool entry is 6 steps, which was mastered easily, if slowly, and then we were in the pool. Once we had both entered the pool fully, Mrs X was off! Breast stroke, back stroke, front crawl, muscle memory kicked in and she was swimming slowly at first and then with growing confidence. There was a good deal of laughter, she was delighted at being able to do something she loved. Her movements increased as did her confidence, plus there was the added joy of seeing young children enjoying the water with their parents. The life guard kept a close watch, but before long we were heading for the deep end, I decided that was a step too far for the first session, so we turned around and headed back into the shallows.

After about 25 minutes, she began to get cold so we headed out, up the steps with confidence, into the shower and then changed. What a difference! A huge smile split her face and her eyes shone.

The next session saw her swim almost five lengths, she smiled, laughed and chatted. We headed for the deep end with her sandwiched between me and the side of the pool, no nerves just sheer exhilaration at doing something she was good at.

At a time in her life when dementia was taking so much away, this simple exercise was bringing something back; fun, enjoyment and the knowledge that she was back in control.

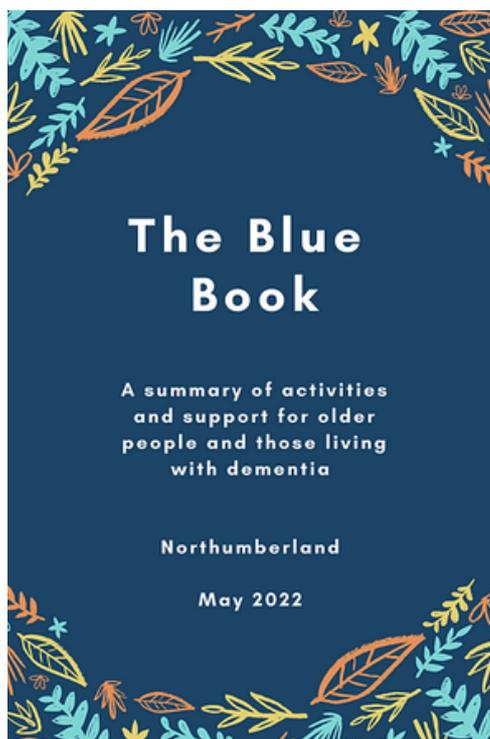
This was the email I received from her daughter following the first swim...

"I can't thank you enough for what you did today - it's a long time since I've heard my mum so excited and delighted. She was thrilled to be back in a swimming pool after all this time and really enjoyed herself. Thank you!"

Just a simple thing that took about 45 minutes in all , but the difference it made was fantastic!



THE BLUE BOOK



The Blue Book

A summary of activities and support for older people and those living with dementia

Passionate about supporting older people and those living with dementia, Adele Kinsella and family launched this booklet in 2017 to provide a tangible summary of activities and support available in Northumberland. Its creation and production has always been a family project. Each year, it is updated and shared in May during Dementia Action Week.

Copies of The Blue Book are available from your Social Prescribing Link Worker or surgery.

Digital copies can be download at www.the-blue-book.org.uk.

"LET ME SEE THOSE JAZZ HANDS"

CASE STUDY BY LISA BAKER

Vision Northumberland (formally known as Northumberland County Blind Association) held free chair exercise classes at their centre in Morpeth and patients enjoyed being able to take part. The instructor, Nicola, had everyone tapping their toes and waving their hands, and even a few sang along to the tunes of Tina Turner, Elvis and George Ezra. The Chatty Cafe was also open afterwards for everyone to relax and catch up with a cuppa & biscuit. The class was a great way to do exercises without realising and the time soon passed. It was a head to toe workout but the biggest muscle everyone stretched was their SMILE!



HEART WARMER

CASE STUDY BY LORNA CHAPPELL



I worked with a 60 year old patient last year who was extremely anxious and who was someone their GP felt may have had a "missed" diagnosis of Asperger's. They were in debt so I referred them initially to CAB. I also put them in touch with the food bank, the log bank and introduced them to their local walk and talk group (which they still attend). They were also working with the Job Centre Coach. I introduced them to a local Trust which had more affordable properties in the area. After a few months on the waiting list a flat was found for them and their pets. A year on I caught up with them. They were debt free and had progressed to doing some voluntary work for the Trust in the Community Garden and are now employed part-time in a local pub kitchen.

Just a great wee success story for a lovely person who just couldn't cope on a daily basis one year ago.

BEING PREPARED

CASE STUDY BY JANE CANNAM



One of our patients, who was also recently bereaved, was referred to social prescribing for support. We spent some time talking with them and for added social connection invited them to join The Well Up North online Knit and Natter group. They enjoyed meeting the characters that make up this wonderful group and know they are always sure of a kind welcome and bit of a blether!! Living remotely and having their treatment at the RVI we helped them access patient transport too to help ease the journeys. On speaking with their family it became clear they were concerned for them in the event of an emergency and requested our support in adding them to the vulnerable list that Northumberland Communities Together set up during Storm Arwen. We also connected them with Carers Northumberland with a view to creating an Emergency Plan which could be left on the fridge and after calls to Age UK we also ascertained information for a pendant alarm which could be worn at all times.

Whilst our patient continues to live independently they are now more secure in the knowledge that things can be in place if needed.



KNIT N NATTER

IN PERSON GROUPS -

WEDNESDAY from 1.30pm to 3.30pm at Mind and Sole Hub

Donations for refreshment requested.

FRIDAYS from 2pm to 4pm at Berwick Library

£2 kitty for Summer or Christmas "dos"

ON LINE GROUP

FRIDAYS from 1pm to 2pm on Zoom.

For an invite to this contact jane.cannam@nhs.net

GREEN SOCIAL PRESCRIBING IN ACTION...

A new gardening project is starting up at Amble Health Centre. The vision is to turn the open space in the quad at the surgery into a Sensory Garden but there is much initial ground work to be done..

Contact Natalie at the Health Centre or by emailing natalie.arnold1@nhs.net if you are interested in being involved.



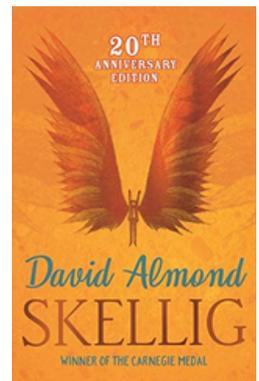
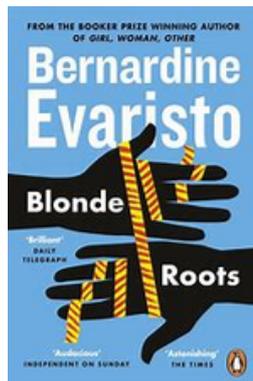
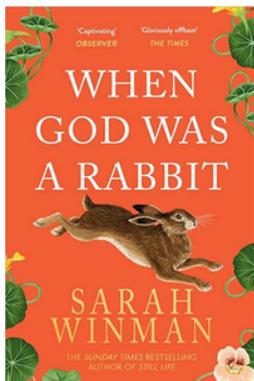
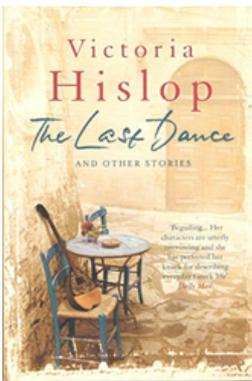
Green social prescribing project

Its not just medicine that can increase our health and wellbeing!
Our social prescriber invites Coquet Medical Group patients to get involved in developing a sensory greenspace at Amble health centre
Adults of all abilities welcome

FIRST SESSION THURSDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2-4PM

Meet and greet, begin weeding, cutting and preparing the space for the gardening calendar 2023!
No booking required
For any prior questions please contact:
natalie.arnold1@nhs.net
07485 348 303

THE WELL UP NORTH BOOK CLUB...



The Well Up North Book Club has now joined up with Northumberland Libraries and so books are free for our members. This powerful group meets once a month on Zoom and has socials too. It's been a life line for people during lockdown and now beyond. One of its regular readers says - "A safe environment where like minded people join together through the love of books and readings". She adds that "Friendships have been made and the group is an absolute gem in our community"!!!

To join contact Jane Cannam at jane.cannam@nhs.net

LESSONS FROM THE LIONESSES

BY KAREN GIBSON

Health Inequalities Lead Co-ordinator



Wasn't it brilliant? 87,000 people packed into Wembley Stadium to see girls play football!! 17.5 million watching at home.

Did the girls do it for themselves - they sure did!! Wow! I never thought I would see the day!! THIS IS WHAT EQUALITY AND INCLUSION LOOKS LIKE. Little girls watching at home wondering....can I do that? If you see it, you can be it!!

The little ten year old me, who played football with the boys every night from age 7 up to about age 15 cried tears of joy. You see, I wasn't allowed to play in the school team even though I was good and better than most of the boys. GIRLS DO NOT PLAY FOOTBALL I was told at school. It was the early 70's, a different time. My mum used to shake her head when the boys knocked on the door to ask if I was coming out to play, they all wanted me on their team as we usually won!

My love for the beautiful game has never diminished, I taught my 2 boys to play, on the field for hours - kickabouts, in goal, penalty shoot outs, went to matches with the teams they joined, tournaments all over the country. Sat watching it on tv together and occasionally going to games in the Premiership.

To see what happened was phenomenal. A moment of change - for the better. 87,000 footie fans in a stadium watching England bring it home and they were WOMEN!! They did it for all those who have gone before them and the sixty year old me was blown away.

North Northumberland born Lucy Bronze was outstanding wasn't she. I know Berwick, Belford and Alnwick must be so proud of her and all of the girls. I think there is talk of her being granted the freedom of Alnwick.

Anyway, just wanted to say "Equality" and "Change for the better" can happen in all walks of life and areas - and isn't it great to see!



MINDFUL MONEY ADVICE FROM NORTHUMBERLAND RECOVERY COLLEGE

Many of us are experiencing difficulties as a result of the cost-of-living crisis. It can be hard to talk about money and money worries can have an impact on your mental wellbeing.

Northumberland Recovery College have put together a list of advice, support and lots of sources of information that can help you through this difficult time.

They are also offering "Mindful Money" online drop-in sessions to look at the link between mental health and money, There will also be practical hints and tips to help support individuals through the cost of living crisis.

Visit www.northumberlandrecoverycollege.co.uk for more information.

Café Connect also operates in several locations around the county. Pop in to the warm cosy centres for a free cup of coffee/tea, cake and more importantly connection.

Online support if struggling with Debt, Benefits or any other money worries

- Mind - www.mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org
- Step Change - www.stepchange.org
- Turn2us - www.turn2us.org.uk
- Citizens Advice - www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- National Debt Line (Government backed debt information)- www.nationaldebtline.org

Where to find money saving tips

- www.moneysavingexpert.com has a cost of living crisis survival guide.
- www.moneyhelper.org.uk has a guide to help save money on household bills.
- www.which.co.uk covers the best ways to save money.
- www.gingerbread.org.uk has tips on making ends meet.

For local advice on cost of living support

- Northumberland County Council - www.northumberland.gov.uk
- Northumberland Communities Together - 01670 620015

